



# Keep Young Workers Safe

## I. Why do teen workers need extra protection?

Young workers are more likely to get injured at work than adults. This is true even though workers under 18 years of age are not allowed to do many of the most dangerous jobs.

Over 200,000 teens in the U.S. are injured on the job each year. On average 70 die. In Maine, about 150 teens under 18 file workers' compensation claims each year. More may get injured and not file claims. We don't know how much time teens lose from school or family activities because of work injuries.

Over 80% of injuries to teens happen in the first year on the job—and 25% of these in the first month. Why? Because teens don't have the experience, skills or training to do their jobs safely. And sometimes employers ask them to do jobs beyond their abilities.

With training, supervision, and appropriate job assignments, teenage workers can stay safe and healthy and make valuable contributions to their jobs. They will also learn skills that can protect them throughout their working lives.

## II. When can teens work and what can they do?

Employers have to follow Federal child labor laws. And some states, like Maine, have additional rules about child labor.

Find out about Federal child labor laws at [www.dol.gov](http://www.dol.gov)

Child labor laws state how early in the day minors (youth under 18) can start work, how late they can work, and how many hours they can work in a day and in a week.

Minors are not allowed to do certain dangerous jobs. Following are some of the jobs minors in Maine **may not** do:

- Drive motor vehicle for work
- Use a meat-slicer or power-driven bakery machine
- Use most power equipment
- Work alone in a cash-based business
- Have direct contact with pesticides
- Roofing
- Welding or cutting

## III. How can employers protect teen workers?

- Know the child labor laws and OSHA regulations. OSHA Regulations apply to workers of all ages.
- Make sure youth under 16 years old (in Maine) have work permits.
- Identify and eliminate hazards.
- Train teens how to do their jobs safely and what to do in case of emergency.
- Supervise teens closely.
- Post the Child Labor Law Poster.

Child Labor Law Resources from the  
Maine Department of Labor

***Safeteen Kit for Employers of Teens***

***A Guide to Maine Laws Governing the  
Employment of Minors***

***Starting Safely: Teaching Youth about  
Workplace Safety and Health***

***Child Labor Poster***

Call 207-624-6400 or go to  
[www.Maine.gov/labor/blsmain.htm](http://www.Maine.gov/labor/blsmain.htm)

For information on other workplace safety and health topics, contact **SafetyWorks!**

**Toll-free: 1-877-SAFE-345 (1-877-723-3345)**

**TTY: 1-800-794-1110**

**Web site: [www.safetyworksmaine.org](http://www.safetyworksmaine.org)**